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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the university supervisor's role in the Professional Development School (PDS) context, examining the influence of the PDS context on one student teacher supervisor's practice at Penn State University and the surrounding school district. The primary vehicle around which the PDS was structured was a 1-year internship for senior undergraduates who spent that time in an elementary school. Data came from the supervisor's daily journal, field notes, observations, and conference notes. He found that several factors appeared to be quite different in the PDS versus traditional context, including: readiness building; relationships with mentors, interns, and children; stages of development in reflective supervision over time; his knowledge of and focus on individual children; his encouragement of interns to progress at an individually appropriate pace; and the role of goal setting and evaluation. Being able to spend significant time over 1 year with interns and mentors significantly altered their relationships, allowing him to become a co-teacher and colleague as well as a supervisor. He was able to focus the supervisory process on individual children as well as children as a whole. He believes that his effectiveness as a supervisor increased in the PDS context. (Contains 15 references.) (SM)

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# THE INFLUENCE OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL CONTEXT ON MY PRACTICE AS A STUDENT TEACHING SUPERVISOR: A PERSONAL NARRATIVE

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## Introduction

Although the role of the university supervisor in the student teaching triad has existed for at least the last seventy years, there is much ambiguity surrounding the role in terms of how it is carried out and with what consequence. Some researchers describe the positive contributions that the university supervisor brings to the triad and to the important role that the supervisor plays in shaping the quality of the field experience for the preservice teacher while others have suggested that the university supervisor plays the least important role in the triad and even go so far as to suggest that university supervisor has a detrimental impact on the experience (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990, Zimpher deVoss & Nott, 1980). Slick (1997) argues that the university supervisor and cooperating teacher rarely enjoy more than a superficial relationship with each other and most often have inconsistent perspectives on the teaching enterprise. Cole and Knowles (1995) assert that the university supervisor is most often relegated to the role of summative evaluator who has insignificant impact on the development of the preservice teacher. Given the conflicting conclusions drawn in the literature concerning the university supervisor's role, one is left with the impression that the role and its contribution to preservice teacher education is largely idiosyncratic and heavily dependent on the personalities of the triad members and the context in which the student teaching takes place.

The influence of the specific student teaching context on the role of the university supervisor has been relatively unexamined in the literature on student teaching. What role does context play? Given a different context would the role of university supervisor (as well as preservice teacher and cooperating teacher for that matter) be different? The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of university supervisor in a relatively new context, the professional development school relationship. More specifically, in this paper I attempt to examine the influence of the PDS context on my own practice as a supervisor of student teachers.

## The Context

Spurred on by recommendations from a plethora of commissions, national reports, and studies of teacher education, professional development schools have been in existence across the United States for about the last ten years (Goodlad, 1990; Holmes, 1986, Holmes, 1990, Levine, 1992). According to Darling Hammond (1994), Professional Development Schools:

> aim to provide new models of teacher education and development by serving as exemplars of practice, builders of knowledge, and vehicles for communicating professional understanding among teacher educators, novices, and veteran teachers. They support the learning of prospective and beginning teachers by creating settings in which novices enter professional practice by working with expert practitioners, enabling veteran teachers to renew their own professional development and assume new roles as mentors, university adjuncts, and teacher leaders. They allow school and university educators to engage jointly in research

and rethinking of practice, thus creating an opportunity for the profession to expand its knowledge base by putting research into practice --- and practice into research (p.1).

As is the case with most educational concepts that become popular over a rather short period of time, the label "professional development school" has come to mean many things to many people. Thus, it is important to attempt to describe the specific professional development school relationship in which the examination of my practice is embedded.

Early Development

The professional development school relationship between Penn State University and the State College Area School District has developed slowly over an eight-year period. The initial step in building the relationship was the employment of a veteran teacher from the school district to supervise Penn State student teachers who were placed in State College. This initiative was followed by a series of meetings, initiated by the superintendent of the school district, to explore opportunities for further collaboration. Through Goals 2000 planning grants and the hard work of particular university faculty and school district employees, a series of small collaborative activities were developed. One of these activities was a summer reading program staffed jointly by university faculty and district teachers in which elementary preservice teachers completed literacy courses and field experiences. A second collaborative venture was a series of opportunities for elementary students to come to the university to participate in science learning centers developed by preservice teacher education students. Following these developmental activities one faculty member began an experimental student teaching program in two of the district's elementary schools and began spending considerable amounts of her time in those schools. Eventually the staffs of these two elementary schools were approached with the idea of establishing a professional development school relationship.

The school staffs and university faculty spent a year planning for the initial pilot year of actual PDS work that began in August 1998. A successful pilot year led to the expansion of the PDS concept to two additional elementary schools for the 1999-2000 school year. The goals of the PDS are to enhance the educational experiences of all children, to ensure high quality induction into the profession, and to engage teachers and university faculty in ongoing, collaborative professional development. Inquiry on the part of interns, mentor teachers, and university faculty, who are called Professional Development Associates, is a core component of our professional development school collaborative. A second core principle which undergirds our PDS relationships is a commitment to collaborative decision-making and collaborative problem solving.

Current Structure

The primary vehicle around which the PDS program is structured is a year-long internship for senior undergraduate students. These students, who are selected jointly by the mentor teachers and university faculty, forego the university calendar and

spend the entire school year in one of the elementary schools. The internship begins with a two week "Jumpstart" on campus during the middle of August. The Jumpstart serves as an orientation to the internship, an opportunity for community building, and a beginning of the methods courses which interns take during the fall semester. During the fall semester each intern takes four methods courses, science, math, social studies, and classroom learning environments and also registers for 3 field experience credits. The interns officially begin their work with their mentor teacher on the very first day of inservice activities for the school district though many of the interns worked with their mentors even earlier than that in order to prepare the classrooms for the first day of school. From September through January, the interns spend every day in school with their mentor teacher, leaving the classroom at 2:30 three days per week for methods classes which are held on site in the schools from 3:30 to 6:30. These methods courses were designed and co-taught by teams of mentor teachers and university faculty through the auspices of a Lucent Technologies Foundation grant.

During the second half of the year interns engage in teacher inquiry projects focused on some aspect of their own teaching practice. Mentors are asked to support the inquiry in one of three ways: 1) by assisting the intern in the intern's inquiry; 2) by engaging in joint inquiry with the intern; or 3) by engaging in their own inquiry project. A graduate level course in teacher inquiry is offered on site to mentor teachers and is attended by interns as well. This year nine mentors are conducting their own inquiry, eight are conducting joint inquiry with their intern, and nine are assisting with the intern's inquiry project. To facilitate the inquiry process, four themes become the focus of the year's work for the interns. Though each of the four themes becomes the foreground for inquiry at one particular time during the year while the others recede to the background, all four themes are in constant interplay. During the Jumpstart the focus is on "Inquiry into Self." "Inquiry into Community and Context" becomes the focus during September. "Inquiry into Children's Thinking and Understanding" moves into the foreground from October through January, and " Inquiry into Oneself as Teacher and One's Teaching Practice" is highlighted from February through June.

## My Role

### Previous Student Teaching Supervision

I have served as a supervisor of student teachers for the past 17 years for three different colleges or universities. My doctoral preparation was focused primarily on instructional supervision and on clinical supervision most specifically. Much of my own writing has been focused on the use of reflective supervision and reflective peer coaching as vehicles for helping teachers to become more self-directed, more analytical about their own practice, and better problem solvers. In the sixteen years prior to 1999, I have supervised well over 100 student teachers at a variety of grade levels and subject areas and served as the Director of a Field Experience Office for three years. During that time I was responsible for supervising 25 student teaching supervisors across the state of Pennsylvania. I have always seen myself as a very good supervisor who was instrumental in the development of the preservice teachers with whom I worked. I tried to remain true to the goals of reflective supervision and have used a variety of supervisory interventions to accomplish those purposes. Thus I

began this PDS experience with a headful of wonderings concerning how my previous work as a student teaching supervisor would relate to this new context and new types of relationships that we were trying to develop.

PDS Supervision Role

Though I was only an observer during the pilot PDS year, I am serving in multiple roles in the PDS context this year. I am the overall coordinator for the PDS project in all four schools. This role entails much liaison and organizational work with the various stakeholders (faculty, mentors, interns, principals, central office personnel, Department Head, Dean, etc.) in the PDS effort as well as responsibility for overseeing the selection process for next year's interns. I also serve as one of the leaders of the classroom learning environments planning team and as the instructor of record for that particular methods course. I am also the Professional Development Associate (PDA) responsible for direct supervision of four interns in three different schools. My work with these interns began in August and will continue through June. Because my entire teaching load is focused on the PDS, I am in each intern's classroom two or three times per week, spending about an hour or more each time. Finally, I also serve as the building liaison who conducts monthly meetings with the mentors and principal in one of the four PDS Sites.

Our decision to call ourselves Professional Development Associates or PDAs instead of supervisors was intended to help all of the stakeholders in the PDS effort recognize that we hoped to play a different role than had been the case previously. Though I have argued elsewhere in the literature that a name change for the role of supervisor is not what is needed in the field of supervision in general (Nolan, 1989), I believe that the name change in this specific situation is appropriate. The name change is intended to convey that while we continue to engage in classroom supervision activities, we are interested not only in the development of the intern but rather in the development of all members of the triad. Also we intend to convey that our role is broader than that of in-class supervision and extends to all the teachers in the school not just those who are serving as mentors.

**Data Sources**

As noted earlier I began this year with many questions concerning how the role of PDA in the professional development school context would be different from that of supervisor in a traditional student teaching triad. I decided that this would be a question to pursue over the course of the year. My intentions at the beginning of the process were to collect data from a variety of sources including a journal that I would write on a daily basis, field notes that would be captured from a variety of activities in which I would be a participant, and the observational data and conference notes that I would use in working with the interns. Since no one else could really compare my behavior in the two different settings over time. I decide that my own thoughts, emotions, and analysis would be the primary data sources.

Given the variety of roles that I am playing in the PDS effort, my efforts at systematic data collection have been rather weak. The daily journal entries have

turned into sporadic journal entries often three weeks apart. I have taken notes at a variety of meetings and from informal conversations but not in as systematic a way as I would have liked. The one data source that has been consistent throughout the process are the observations and conference notes from my interactions with the interns that were recorded on triplicate sheets. Thus, I have to confess that much of this paper is really an act of reconstruction on my part aided to some degree by my sporadic journaling, informal field notes, and triplicate data and conferencing sheets. It might best be viewed as what Garman call " Reflection through Recollection" (1986). As such it is open to errors and misinterpretations due to faulty memory, distorted memory, etc. However, what follows is the best that I can offer presently in terms of comparing my own supervisory behavior in two different contexts over time.

## The Supervisor and The PDA: A Comparison

The sections of the paper that follow focus on the differences between my supervision in a traditional student teaching setting and my supervision in the PDS context. I do not mean to imply that the two are completely different. There are at least as many, if not more, similarities, as there are differences.

Some examples of the similarities between the two contexts follow. My espoused platform as a supervisor has not changed. I still believe that supervision should be inquiry oriented and data based, should focus on the consequences of teaching practice for learners, should be aimed at helping teachers become more reflective, more self-directed, more analytical and better problem solvers, should be developmentally appropriate, should model the teaching-learning process that I advocate for students, and should be a vehicle for supervisor growth as well. I also still engage in ongoing cycles of observation and conferencing in which the preservice teacher plays a key role in determining the focus of the observations when to do so is developmentally appropriate. I also still expect the preservice teacher to become increasingly more adept at analyzing observational data and using it to make decisions about his/her teaching practice. I find no more time available for preconferencing or data analysis, preceding the post-conference, in the PDS context than I did in the traditional student teaching context. I still use weekly journals as a tool for ongoing discussion of the preservice teacher's espoused platform and modifications to it as the teaching experience grows over time. I am still charged with the role of summative evaluator in both determining who is recommended for teacher certification and in assigning grades to the preservice teachers. Finally, I still believe that it is my moral responsibility to insure that learners are not harmed by the teaching practices of preservice teachers and that I have the obligation to correct such behavior whenever it occurs. Though there are additional examples that could be addressed, I believe that these will suffice to say that much has remain unchanged while in other ways, the PDS context has resulted in significant changes in my own supervisory practice.

### Readiness Building

It has always been my belief that the most commonly ignored and undervalued stage of the original clinical supervision model articulated by Cogan (1973) was the process of building readiness for clinical supervision. With the exception of a very well

crafted piece by Goldsberry (1986), readiness building has received scant attention in the literature. I have found that the PDS context has given me the opportunity to build readiness for supervision at a very different level.

In my role of traditional student teaching supervisor, I was charged with the supervision of a group of students for a twelve to fifteen week period. Typically, the student teachers began the student teaching semester with a one-day orientation to student teaching that I conducted. Usually this orientation took place on campus away from the schools. We spent the day trying to get to know one another, and making sure that everyone understood all of the requirements for the student teaching semester. After this one-day orientation, the student teachers went to the school setting the following day to begin working with the cooperating teachers. Usually, I would visit each classroom during the initial week of the experience to see the classroom, to make sure that the cooperating teacher was aware of the expectations, and to make sure that the student teacher-cooperating teacher relationship was off to a good start. I would then meet the students in a group for a seminar sometime during the first week. During the second week of the semester, students would begin teaching, and I would begin the process of observation and conferencing.

The PDS structure has given me the opportunity to spend much more time building readiness for the process of supervision on the part of both the intern and the mentor teacher. I spent six hours every day for two weeks with the interns in the Jumpstart program. During that time we engaged in several community building activities, and each intern created a timeline depicting his/her significant life events to that point in time. After Jumpstart the interns moved into the schools with the expectation that they would not begin teaching for a substantial period of time. By teaching we mean planning and conducting learning activities. Much of the intern's time was spent simply getting acquainted with the children and helping to implement some learning activities planned by the mentor teacher. During this first month of school, I spent time in classrooms getting to know the mentor, the intern, and the children. I worked with individual children, worked with small groups of learners, and on a few occasions co-taught lessons with the mentor teacher and intern. As a result I became an accepted part of the classroom by all the participants and had a much clearer picture of the context. I also began to establish a relationship with the interns through their weekly field experience journals and through their work in the classroom learning environments course that I was co-teaching.

As a result of the structure of the PDS and my various roles, I was able to establish a personal relationship with each of my supervisees, their mentors, and their children before I ever collected one piece of observational data or asked the intern to analyze his/her own practice. I had a pretty clear picture of what each of them hoped to stand for as a teacher and a lengthy opportunity to assess what opportunities and challenges the classroom and school context would provide them as they attempted to enact those espoused platforms.

Another significant aspect of this readiness building period was the clear establishment of my vulnerability as a teacher and supervisor. In working with the children in the classroom, it became clear pretty quickly that I did not have all the

answers. Though I generally did a good job, sometimes I was not successful in achieving what I hoped to achieve or even what the mentor teacher expected me to achieve in my interactions with the children. One particular interaction in Barbara's (the mentor) second grade classroom stands out. As I was working with Matilda and her partner on a math activity, it became clear that the partners were not changing roles as they had been asked to do by the mentor teacher. I mentioned to the partners that the other children were all taking turns, one manipulating the buttons and the other counting. Matilda replied, "We don't want to do that." They continued not to take turns as I sat silently for a minute. Finally, I said, "You know, I really would like you to take turns so that you both get a chance to do some counting." My desire was ignored. I interrupted again saying, "Matilda, I know you prefer not to take turns, but you must." I felt rather proud at this point that I had modeled my own hierarchy of classroom management intervention, beginning with a neutral observation, moving to a polite request, and eventually to a command. As I was contemplating how well I had done, Matilda put her head down on the desk, muttered quite loudly, "No wonder, I hate teachers, " and decided simply to rest. Luckily the activity ended in a few seconds. I was saved by the timer.

The intern, Sandy, had observed this interaction. As you can imagine, she no longer viewed me as the expert who had all the answers to classroom management problems. The incident also provided me with an opportunity to talk with Sandy about my feelings concerning the encounter with Matilda and to model my own reflection about why the interaction had gone that way and how I might have reshaped the outcome. Although there was no other incident with other interns that was so dramatic, there were plenty of instances in which I had the opportunity to model the process of thinking through instructional problems in reference to my own practice or that of the mentor. I believe that these opportunities helped to establish both the importance of reflection as well as the mutual vulnerability and sense of humility that are critical components of reflective supervision as I see it. Thus, when we began the cycles of observation and conferencing, some important groundwork had already been laid.

Stages of Development in Reflective Supervision

The opportunity to work with the interns over the course of an entire school year also resulted in a different sequence of supervisory events. In traditional student teaching supervision, my supervisory behavior was really divided into two stages. Given the shorter time frame, I did not have the luxury of developing readiness gradually. I generally began observation and conferencing during the second week of the semester and continued throughout the entire experience. During the initial weeks of the semester, my strategies tended to be more supervisor directed. I chose the focus for observations. I selected the aspects that we would focus on during the conference and typically controlled the flow of interaction during the conference. I tended to ask questions which focused the supervisee on particular aspects of the data asking him/her to interpret the data and modeling the interpretation process when they could not do so. I typically ended each conference with some written summaries about what we had discussed and some goals to work on for the next observation.

Gradually over the course of the semester, I changed my supervisory strategy to a more collaborative approach. I asked the student teacher to select the focus for observations (while always retaining the right to add additional data that I saw as important.) I allowed the postconference to be more free flowing and allowed the supervisee to direct what we would talk about. My goal was to eventually enable the student teacher to become capable of being an equal partner in the process of observing and analyzing his/her teaching practice. Though the goal was uniform, the timetable was not. Each supervisee developed these capabilities at his/her own pace. Some developed these skills early in the semester while other never became capable of playing an equal role in the collaborative process.

The full year timeline and the PDS structure have changed the nature of my practice in terms of the movement toward collaborative reflection. As noted above, there is a much greater opportunity to build readiness for observation and conferencing before it begins. Once the intern begins to assume some planning responsibilities, we begin the observation cycles. In the early stages of observation, I still tend to be rather directive and controlling and move gradually to a more collaborative type of supervision in which the intern drives the data collection and conferencing. The process of moving to a more collaborative relationship was the focus of my supervisory practice from October through February. This is a much more extended period of time than was available in traditional student teaching and it allowed me to be more comfortable with the individualized nature of development and to allow the process to proceed at its own pace. For example, Allison was selecting observational foci in late October, but Mark did not really begin to do so until the middle of December.

Beginning in February, each of the interns and their mentors began working on teacher inquiry projects. This had a significant impact on both my behavior and their ability to collaborate as partners. The interns were now quite eager to specify the particular types of data that I should collect and spent time analyzing the data both during conferences and independently as well. It appears as if the inquiry projects have given them both the motivation and the confidence to play a major role in defining the supervision process. I expect that the skills developed through the inquiry process will make the supervisory process much more collaborative in the final months of the school year.

Conversations vs. Conferences

In writing about the purpose of clinical supervision, Goldhammer (1968) described the need to make our vague discontent about the irrational nature of schools more articulate. In this section my goal is to try to articulate one vague discontent that I am feeling about my work as a PDA. I apologize for not being more articulate about it, but it is a discontent that I have just began to realize recently.

One of the aspects of the PDS structure that I have struggled with recently is the difference between conversations about teaching and postconferences which are based on observational data. I have long advocated that reflective conferences should really be

conversations about teaching which are guided by a spirit of inquiry and driven by data (see Goldsberry & Nolan, 1983). However, I have noticed a sharp distinction in my PDA work this year between conversations and data driven conferences.

As I have explained above, much of my PDA work during the early part of the year was focused on spending time in classrooms, working with children and observing without collecting data formally. These experiences were usually followed by conversations among the intern, the mentor and me. The conversations focused on teaching events that had taken place or on individual children. These conversations were generally very free flowing. It was often not clear who was in control of the process. Each of us was free to ask questions, make comments and suggestions, and to direct the flow of the conversation.

As the year progressed, I began doing more formal observation of the intern, collecting data that formed the basis for our postconference, As stated earlier, I tended to be somewhat directive for most of the interns at this early stage because I did not feel that they were ready to engage in collaborative analysis and reflection. The result was that the conferences seemed much more formalized and artificial to some degree. I felt like I was playing the role of supervisor. When we moved to the inquiry phase, the formality and artificiality began to fade away as the interns took the lead in asking for data that related directly to their inquiry projects. They also played a very collaborative role in analyzing these data. Now as we are beginning to move away from the teacher inquiry focus towards a more general reflective supervision model, I see the artificiality creeping back in. Even though the interns still select the focus, the choices seem driven more by the need to choose a focus for supervision that real passion for learning something.

I am still struggling with this observation and am not sure what the cause of this discrepancy might be. It could be that I was unnecessarily directive early in the observation process and set up artificial roles. I need to find a way to make supervision seem less like a role and more like a natural conversation. This did not seem to be a problem for me in my former work as a student teaching supervisor because we never had time to have those free flowing conversations. Our work together was driven by data and consisted primarily of postconferences. I don't mean to imply that the postconferences with the interns are not productive. They usually are, but they seem somewhat forced and unnatural. As I complete this year with my interns, I need to do some more reflecting on my own concerning why the conferences seem artificial and also ask the interns if they have the same perceptions. My goal would be to make data driven conferences seem as natural as free flowing conversations among colleagues.

Relationships

One of the most significant differences between my traditional student teaching supervision and my work as a PDA has been in the relationships that I have built with interns, mentors, and children. The greatest factor in the improved relationships with the interns is probably the extended time period. I know these interns the same way that I used to know students when I was a classroom teacher. I know them as students, but I also know a great deal more about them as people. In my various roles

as methods instructor, supervisor, and PDS coordinator, I have had the opportunity to engage in many informal conversations with each of them. I also see them much more frequently than I saw my student teachers in the past. I would characterize my relationships with them as much more trusting and supportive (from their point of view) than it was previously. They request my presence and help in conducting lessons. They ask for help in planning much more frequently, and they try to make me feel guilty when I am not there.

Recently, Allison's mentor was away for two weeks. Though there was a substitute teacher present, Allison did all the teaching. In the weeks before her mentor left, Allison was very apprehensive, telling me that she would really need my support. I promised that I would be there to support her. During the first week that her mentor was away, I spent an hour in her room on Monday and 90 minutes on Tuesday. Everything went splendidly. On Wednesday, I was unable to be there due to some previous commitments. When I arrived bright and early on Thursday, Allison greeted me with. "Well, where have you been?"

In January we arranged a meeting for prospective interns for next year which featured a panel of interns from this year. Carol, one of my supervisees, was part of the panel by her own choice. One of the prospective interns asked about the relationship with PDAs. Carol responded, " Honestly when Jim or any of the other PDAs are in my room, I like it. I feel like it is a real support network. I know that Jim will also be giving me a grade, but I never feel like he is there to judge me. He is there to help me succeed and to help me think better." I believe that this quote captures the intern-PDA relationship pretty well. I attribute this change in relationships to the extended time frame that allows the intern to proceed at his/her own pace and allows the relationship to develop more naturally over time as well as to the multiple roles that I play.

The relationship with the mentor teachers is also quite different from my relationship with cooperating teachers in the traditional student teaching program. I would describe the relationship that I previously developed with cooperating teachers as being quite similar to that which develops between divorced parents. Their only common interest is often the child whom they both parent. They really have no reason or desire to continue the relationship with each other apart from the child.

My relationship with the PDS mentors is quite different. We have a direct relationship with each other on a variety of levels. One of the mentors is a member of the planning team for the classroom learning environments course. Thus we collaborated on that methods course. Three of the mentors decided to enroll in the graduate level course on teacher inquiry so we worked with each other in that context. In addition, each of the mentors has called on me throughout the year to help with particular lessons and to discuss particular children in their classrooms in order to get another professionals' view of what is happening. I believe that as they have seen my work with children (as previously noted, not always good), their image of me has changed from professor to teacher. Initially some of the requests for help seemed to be a sort of – "Let's see what you can do if you are the expert on classroom management." I was often asked to work individually with kids who were diagnosed as

ADD or to work with a small group who had difficulty staying on task. Sometimes I passed the tests, but sometimes I didn't.

These experiences with challenging children were very humbling for me and pointed out very vividly the difference between procedural and declarative knowledge. In a campus context, I could have analyzed the "Dickens" out of those challenging kids. Unfortunately my actions in the real world were usually not as fluent as my words on campus or in the workshop setting. The failures, however, had a great upside in terms of relationships. The mentors began to see me as someone who is willing to struggle, to come back and try again, and occasionally to even admit defeat. As I trusted them not to think less of me as a professional because I sometimes failed, they trusted me to treat them with the same professional deference and respect. As a result we have a relationship that goes beyond the intern though the intern's development is clearly a major part of it.

I don't mean to imply that my relationships with the four mentors are all the same. They have developed slowly over time as well. One mentor, Kathy, who did not work on the planning team with me or take the inquiry course, has taken a much longer time to see me as a colleague as opposed to a supervisor. Part of the distance between us stems from differences in classroom management style. She is a very nurturing, caring teacher who runs a teacher-directed classroom. In the beginning of the year, I found myself struggling with how to make sure my interactions with the children in her classroom conformed to her expectations. (In that sense it was very enlightening to feel again how interns feel when they are guests in someone else's classroom)

For example, I helped with one science lesson where the children were testing different foods with iodine to check for the presence of carbohydrates. Kathy, Carol, and I each worked with two small groups. I allowed the children in my groups to drop the iodine on the foods. As I glanced over at Kathy, I realized that she was using the dropper, not the kids. I thought, "Oh Oh, I wonder if I am supposed to be letting them use the dropper or not." However, Kathy did not see it as a problem.

In fact this lesson was probably the initial step in developing our relationship. One of the foods, I forget which one now, turned two different colors. One color indicated that it was a carbohydrate. The other indicated it was not. I was panicked at first. I thought that Kathy would know the right answer for sure and would be quite disappointed that I didn't. I finally summoned up the courage to walk over to Kathy and say. " Kathy, I need some help. I don't know whether this is a carbohydrate or not." She replied, "Oh good, neither do I. Let's just use it to talk with them about how sometimes experiments are not conclusive and that we need to do more research" – exactly what I had hoped to do.

From her reaction ("Oh, Good") it was clear to me that Kathy was afraid that I knew the answer and would think less of her for not knowing it. Our shared vulnerability (or is it ignorance) began the development of a relationship between us. Though our relationships is still not as collaborative as the others, we are on our way, and my presence has been requested by Kathy on three other occasions to help her

with lessons. I believe that the increased time that I am able to spend with each mentor and the opportunity to address classroom problems together have resulted in genuine collaborative relationships between us, independent of the intern.

Focus on Children

In addition to developing different types of relationships with the interns and mentors, I have also developed a very different relationship with the children in my role as PDA. In my work as a supervisor in the traditional student teaching context, I was able to visit each classroom approximately 12 times in a fifteen-week semester. My role in the classroom was as an observer watching the student teacher teach. After quickly acknowledging children when they tried to get my attention, I generally tried to ignore their waves, smiles, and whispers. It's not that I don't love children, I do, but I did not want to be a disturbance in the classroom and also needed to focus on my observation task.

As you already know, my role this year has been quite different. At this point in the year, I have probably visited each classroom at least sixty times, often being in the same room several days in a row. In addition, I have been in the classroom in many roles. Sometimes I am an observer, but I sometimes work directly with children. As a result, the children know me, and I know them. I can call them each by name, even outside the classroom context.

When Kathy was out sick recently, Ellen one of her students came up to me with a birthday card which the children had made in anticipation of Kathy's upcoming birthday. Ellen asked me if I wanted to sign the card along with the rest of the class. As I walked into Barbara's room this week, Kyle yelled, "Dr. Nolan" and rushed over to give me a hug (Matilda has yet to do that, but she is willing to talk to me now). When I arrived in Kathryn's class (Allison's mentor) two weeks ago during indoor recess, three children came up to me and asked if I could pick out their individual art project from the display of all the students' work. I was able to pinpoint one student's drawing exactly and to narrow the choices down to two possibilities for the other two students. These three incidents symbolize for me the degree to which the children know me and see me as a part of the classroom and vice versa.

Knowing the children well is important in itself, but it has also had an important impact on my behavior as a supervisor. I have long advocated that the impact of teaching behavior on learners should be a central focus of the reflective supervision process (see Goldsberry & Nolan, 1983). As a result, I have endeavored as a supervisor to focus student teachers thinking on the consequences of their practice for children. As a student teaching supervisor, this behavior has often taken the form of asking the student teacher to analyze the actual or potential impact of his/her behavior as shown by observational data. The questions have usually been about children in general. Within the PDS context, my questions tend to be quite different.

I am now familiar with all the children whom I am observing. I have some sense of their general personality characteristics, their learning styles, and their strengths and weaknesses as learners. Thus, I am able to focus the interns' attention not only on the

impact of their behavior in general but also very specifically on individual children. I am able to ask for example, "I know that Rodger has real trouble with motor skills. When you were planning the lesson what modifications did you think about making so that he would be able to make the appropriate size fraction bars? " I am much more aware of potential trouble spots in learning activities for various learners and able to ask questions, sometimes, in advance of lessons that help the intern think through adaptations that need to be made. In other words, my questions have changed from how do you think the children did with this activity to how do you think Rodger, Amelia, Kristoff, and Tamara did with this activity. In this rephrasing each child represents a different type of learner who is likely to experience the lesson quite differently. In this way, I am able to provide much more feedback and scaffolding to help the interns deal more productively with individual differences and to help them come to grips with the complexities of the classroom. My previous focus on consequences for the children has been augmented by a focus on the consequences for the individual child.

Goal Setting vs. Evaluation

One of the most critical yet somewhat distasteful parts of traditional student teaching supervision for me was the assigning of performance grades at the end of the semester. Throughout the semester I did everything I could think of to keep the focus of the process on formatively evaluating the student teacher's performance. We used goal setting as a means of keeping the focus on continuous improvement and to keep the focus away from the final grade. I did this to try to protect the intern and myself from the enormous pressure that each intern felt to earn an "A" grade in student teaching. The motto that each student teacher seemed to carry within his/her heart was " An 'A' or Die." Though I tried to focus on goals and continuous improvement, the pressure of needing to earn an "A" by the end by the end of the semester insured that the student teachers always had one eye on the final grade. I often felt that the student teachers saw me as judge and jury from the beginning of the semester to the end. They seemed hell bent on impressing me with their work ethic and teaching performance.

Though grades are equally important to the interns that I supervise, the extended time period and their feelings of ongoing support seem to deflect the enormous pressure of grading to some degree. Rather than seeing me as judge and jury, I believe that they see me as a vehicle for helping them to reach those high standards of an "A" grade. This stems in part, I think, from the fact that I began observing them early in the fall during some of their first teaching experiences. At that point, they did not feel capable of being very impressive. They just wanted to live to teach another day and not screw up too badly. They, the mentor, and I all looked at them as neophytes who were just beginning to learn how to teach. In contrast, the traditional student teaching context sometimes seems to be viewed as a prolonged test in which the student teacher is supposed to demonstrate all those things that he/she has previously learned.

Because we had a year to work with and could allow each individual to proceed at his/her own pace, we were not focused on how well the interns met performance standards until much later in the process. The field experience in the fall was graded on a pass/fail basis. Thus, we did talk about performance standards but not as the measure of a letter grade. Before we really began to discuss performance standards for an "A" in student teaching, we were at the end of January, and our relationship of trust and support was already well established. Until that point in the year, goal setting was really a mechanism for talking about continuous improvement and self-analysis. Since that point in January, my perception is that goals are partly about continuous improvement but also partly about where the intern stands in terms of a final grade. In the traditional student teaching setting, they seemed to be exclusively about making the grade.

Individualized Nature of Learning to Teach

In multiple sections of the paper I have referred to the luxury of having an entire year to supervise interns as they learn how to teach. This year-long time frame has many benefits, some of which have been articulated already. One of the most startling benefits for me has been my own " discovery" of the individualized nature of learning to be a teacher. I must admit that I feel sort of stupid admitting that I have just realized this year how individualized the process of learning to teach is. I said it previously and believed it at some abstract level, but I never really recognized it in my day to day practice as I should have.

In my defense, I believe that the nature of the traditional student teaching experience blinded me to this reality to some degree. In the three different universities in which I have supervised student teachers, The structure of the experience has been remarkably similar. The student teachers are expected to spend approximately the first week observing their cooperating teacher and other teachers. Sometime during the second week, the student teacher is expected to begin teaching one class section or one subject. If that goes well, the student teacher picks up another class or subject about a week and a half later. This pattern of continually increasing the student teacher's load continues until there are about 5 or six weeks left in the semester. At this point, the student teacher is expected to be teaching the full class load that the mentor teacher carries, including extra duties. Of course, if we are at the secondary level, and the mentor has an AP class, only the most outstanding student teacher is allowed to teach these students who probably could learn without any adults being present (Forgive me, I digress). This expected pattern for assuming responsibilities is generally well known and adhered to quite rigidly. If the student teacher has special circumstances, then individual alterations may be made. However, in the absence of special circumstances, any student teacher who is not able to keep up this pace becomes suspect. The cooperating teacher and supervisor begin to worry about whether the student is going to make it or not.

One of the principles that undergirds our PDS is the belief that the interns need to be allowed to progress at their own individual pace. We expect that they will all be capable of carrying the full teaching load by the end of the year, but we expect them to get to that point at different times. In concert with this belief, we place the mentor

teacher and PDA in the role of helping the intern develop an Individualized Intern Plan (IIP). In developing the IIP, the mentor, intern and PDA meet regularly to take stock of where the intern is and to lay out a series of tasks that will move the intern forward at an appropriate pace. The result of the IIP process is that the interns assume responsibilities at very different rates. For example, Mark has been teaching a small group of math students every day from October until April when he assumed responsibility for the entire class. He did not begin teaching language arts until late February. Carol, on the other hand, has been teaching language arts since November and will only begin teaching math for the first time this week. Some mentors and interns decide to proceed subject by subject with the intern gradually assuming more subjects. Other intern-mentor pairs decide to work by units with the intern picking up responsibilities for one unit in a particular subject, then giving responsibility back to the mentor for the next unit, and picking up the responsibility again for the following unit (See Silva, 1999, for a description of this iterative process of assuming responsibilities)

One of the outcomes of the IIP process for me has been the opportunity to watch as the different interns proceed at different rates of development. As a student teaching supervisor, I did not have the luxury of watching development proceed at an appropriate pace. My attempts to help students adhere to the scheduled expectations for the student teaching semester often resembled the behavior of a classroom teacher who feels compelled to push the students forward so that they will be able to cover the curriculum. In pushing student development to conform to a uniform pace, individual differences tend to be ignored or seen as something to be overcome. In our PDS context with its IIP structure, I have found a process that models the developmental approach that I advocate for children. As a result, I have a much clearer understanding of the individualized nature of the process of learning to teach.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper was to explore the influence of the PDS context on my practice as a student teaching supervisor. Though there are many aspects of my practice that have remained stable, I have also found significant differences in my work as a PDA. Readiness building; relationships with mentors, interns and children; the stages of the supervision process over time; my knowledge of and focus on individual children; encouraging interns to progress at an individually appropriate pace; and the role of goal setting and evaluation appear to me to be quite different in the PDS context.

Having the opportunity to spend significant amounts of time in multiple roles over an entire year with the interns and mentors has significantly altered our relationships. It has enabled me to become a co-teacher and colleague as well as a supervisor and has resulted in the ability to focus the supervisory process on individual children as well as children as a whole. The full year experience and the IIP structure have enabled us to allow each intern to proceed at a developmentally appropriate pace. As I see it, my effectiveness as a supervisor has increased but that question still remains unanswered. This paper has focused only on the process of supervision from my point of view. This is merely an initial step in the process of trying to understand and assess the process of supervision in a PDS context. The questions of whether the supervision

process context leads to better outcomes for mentors, interns, PDAs, and children needs to be addressed in future work.

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